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ABSTRACT

The five papers that constitute this issue of the "Journal of the Arizona Communication and Theatre Association" represent interest in a direction for interpretation studies which has proved rewarding for traditional students as well as for people outside typical classroom settings. With literature firmly at the center, many teachers and scholars are expanding their view of both research and performance in interpretation to include creation of interpretation events, formulation of training and development programs, and studies in attitude change, small group development, leisure time activity, and self discovery. The authors of the articles have had personal experience with such an expanded view of the interpretation field: one with prison settings, one with women's awareness groups, one with content analysis of small groups in rehearsal situations, and one with liturgical settings. This issue concludes with a conversation with Arizona State University professor Janet G. Elsea, a pioneer in developing and teaching the concept of interpretation in its social contexts. (Author/JF)

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Thematic Issue: Interpretation Beyond the Classroom

Arizona Communication and Theatre Association
1978

Carol Ann Valentine, Editor

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. . . From Our Editor

The Association had set a goal for the Journal: to have one issue a year with a specific focus.

So it is that this Spring issue is a fitting one. Its theme "Interpretation Beyond the Classroom" will, hopefully, achieve two purposes.

First, the articles will likely aid in expanding the conception of oral interpretation. To some, if not many, the words oral interpretation of literature do not inspire visions of great social relevance. Interpretation, however, can be and is vital and relevant. Oral interpretation can be a vehicle of hope, joy, acceptance and understanding. The concept of interpretation is a versatile one. Its applications are so wide they include settings such as prisons, hospitals, mental institutions, and public parks as well as the classroom. These are only suggestions. Readers will likely be stimulated to try interpreters theatre in their own setting.

A second purpose of this special issue is to encourage other special issues with, a possible, a beyond the classroom theme. Perhaps next Spring we can focus on theatre beyond the classroom interpersonal, group or public communication beyond the classroom. All readers are invited to send ideas and writing for future theme issues.

Best wishes for the summer. The time will, we hope, allow you relaxation and an opportunity to write some of your classroom experiences for the Journal.

Sincerely yours,
Carol Ann Valentine
Carol Ann Valentine
Editor, ACTA Journal

. . . On Manuscripts,

The Journal of the Arizona Communication and Theatre Association is published semiannually in April and November. It is scholarly in nature and eclectic in scope. Subjects may range in approach and style; research articles, empirical studies and surveys, persuasive essays, original scripts, poems, adaptations and analytical stories are not only invited but encouraged.

Manuscripts should conform to the standards set forth in the MLA Style Sheet (2nd Ed., 1970), and generally should not exceed 2000 words.

In addition the ACTA solicits news of its members and their activities.

Manuscripts and news should be sent to:

Dr. Carol Ann Valentine
Communication
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona 85281

. . . From Our President

Dear ACTA Colleagues,

It is difficult to believe that another school year has almost come to a close and we are once again ready to trade in classroom keys for summer school schedules, travel passports, or (for the less fortunate) more keys. While it is probably more enjoyable to leave the past behind the contemplate a productive year ahead, it seems necessary to reflect on the past year's events in order to put that future into clear focus.

This year has been an exceptionally rewarding one for me, and I'd like to share some of the highlights with you. As ACTA president, I've had the fortune of meeting many new faces and working in various new capacities. Our organization's involvements have been numerous and, in capsulized form, have included the following: the ACTA sponsored cocktail party in October, the Arizona Alliance of Arts in Education Conference in late October, the Western Speech Communication Conference in November, the Speech Communication Association Conference in December, the Western Regional Alliance of Arts Conference in January, and most recently, our ACTA spring meeting. This is not to mention our continual activity with The Alliance, and our own individual commitments to theatre productions, speech tournaments, publications, and the myriad of other activities we seem prey to. Amidst the proliferation of ideas and materials I have encountered this year, the most penetrating and lasting impressions have concerned the purpose and structure of our own state organization. The positive response to our social events (evidenced by numbers attending the verbal feedback) seems symptomatic of one need that has not been fulfilled -- to meet together in situations where informal exchange of ideas can take place, devoid of the pressures of competition and constraining time demands.

More profound, perhaps, were the revelations from the national conferences, where the disseminating of information and major decision-making occurred. While I was not really surprised, I was very impressed with the sophistication and potent force of other state organizations. My primary goal was to uncover the vehicles used in building such effective structures. I discovered that one great advantage rests in sheer numbers--the more interest, the more workers, the more productivity. I was also reminded that organizational structures are built and maintained by efficient and energetic leadership, quantity and quality communications (within and without the organization), influential political involvement, and members who are, in the large scope, committed to the advancement of all the communicative arts. By virtue of our population, Arizona may never be superior to other states in quantity, but we need not be inferior in quality. As I tour the speech tournament circuit in the state, I observe numbers of inspired, creative coaches who are rigorously involved in building their respective programs. If some of those energies could be channeled into support of all the arts, we could build the state and federal level clout that we need. New sources of generous federal funding have recently become realistic possibilities for our state, but they are specifically proposed for combined arts programs. Thus, we can no longer

be satisfied with "doing our own thing", exclusive of the other arts. At this point in time, such a policy of isolationism could be our financial demise.

While state organizations throughout the country seem diverse in structure and ideology, they are mutually aligned in a battle against the same foe: the return to the 3 r's. With this demon at our door, The Alliance can be beneficial, perhaps necessary, in delivering front line munitions. If we are placed in the position of protecting our territory, and we are short in numbers, we must play a superior strategy game. The Alliance of Arts concept is infantile as yet, but it is gaining ground in Arizona, and other states are reaping great benefits rapidly. Though I am obviously aware of our need to join forces, I am also wary of a potential danger to avoid--the diffusing of individual disciplines for the sake of union. We must always strive for specialized growth and excellence in our individual areas of interest!

The last subject for examination is a rather unique feature of our own state organization: its dual role of serving both the communication and theatre interests. Most other state organizations have long since declared themselves separate (but friendly) entities. There is a strong separatism movement generating in our organization, as well as an equally strong antithesis force which warns, "together or die." Perhaps it is time to examine the possible separation of interests. Will the organization, divided, meet the needs of its members more effectively, and if so, what are the other possible ramifications of such a structural change?

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for having been the greatest highlight of this past year. It has been a special pleasure to meet and work with so many new faces from around the state. As we discuss plans for next year--ACTA sponsored speech tournaments and drama festivals, combined arts programs, conferences, social events--we hope you will join us to share your ideas and opinions. We need your input! Until then, may you enjoy a healthy, happy, and productive spring semester.

Sincerely,

Kerry Cahill

Kerry Cahill
ACTA President

v

"INTERPRETATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM"
Introduction to Special Issue

The five papers which constitute this issue of the ACTA Journal represent interest in a direction for interpretation studies which has proved rewarding for students as well as for people outside typical classroom settings. With literature firmly at the center, many teachers and scholars are expanding the purview of both research and performance in interpretation to include studies in attitude change, small group development, leisure-time activity, and self-discovery; creation of interpretation events in such settings as prisons, nursing homes, retirement centers, houses of worship, parks and recreational areas, hospitals and medical schools, and half-way houses for alcoholics; and formulation of training and development programs, such as internships and volunteer projects, as part of an interpretation curricula which may better prepare students for life beyond the college degree.

The authors of the articles in this issue have had personal experience with such an expanded view of the interpretation field: one with prison settings, one with women's awareness groups, one with content analysis of small groups in rehearsal situations, and one with liturgical settings. As a fitting conclusion for the theme of "interpretation beyond the classroom," the issue includes a conversation with ASU professor Janet G. Elsea, a pioneer in developing and teaching the concept of interpretation in its social contexts.

K. B. Valentine
Associate Professor
Arizona State University
Special Issue Editor

Rationale for Communication Arts in Correctional Institutions
by
K. B. Valentine and Maureen Donovan

When literature, oral interpreters, and audience fuse at the moment of performance, the result can be joyful. An emotion rarely associated with prison personnel on either side of the locked door, joy was evident in inmates, guards, and outsiders on a December evening in 1977 when Arizona State University students Kristina Coggins, Laurie Frick, and Rachael Rognrud fused themselves and their prison audience to Christmas literature. "This is the first time since I've been here that I've got something happy to write home about," one of the inmates said.

Personal, active, and direct involvement with literature, in a performer or audience capacity, has the potential for lasting benefits for prison inmates. Having worked in correctional facilities in Kentucky and Arizona, Valentine and Donovan present, in these pages, a rationale for a communication arts program in correctional institutions as part of an inmate's total rehabilitation program. Since each inmate differs in personality, offence, and reason for incarceration, the theory of differential treatment acknowledges that no one type of rehabilitative treatment is best for all inmates.

Confronted with the need for varied rehabilitation activities penal institutions are looking with favor on inmate participation in reading literature aloud, choral reading, interpreters theatre, improvisational theatre, and creative writing. Such communication arts related activities can help inmates develop creative potential so that they may operate more successfully in their environments, and are consistent with the theory of differential treatment.

An outstanding inmate participant in a communication arts program is Michael Hogan, Arizona State Prison, and author of two books of poetry, Letters For My Son and If You Ever Get There. Mr. Hogan is also an oral reader of his work before college audiences in Arizona. His article in the American Poetry Review candidly discusses the therapeutic effect of the writer's workshop sponsored in the prison by the Arizona Commission on the Arts and Humanities:

> So we would get up early in the cellblock before the lights were turned on and our cellpartners were awake. We would write by the dim "security lights" in the cellblock, getting it all out, spewing it out in great, gulping bursts each morning: all the rage, all the rage, all the hatred, the remorse, the fear, the frustration came out.
>
> As the months went by, the same old lousy prison months, there was a new excitement among us, a new zest for life. We knew we had a

---

K. B. Valentine is an Associate Professor of Communication at Arizona State University; Maureen Donovan is a graduate student at the University of Kentucky.

choice and we had made it.[1]

Hogan's beneficial experience as an inmate is echoed by a teacher in the communication arts program in the New York State penal system named Marvin Camillo. Camillo's group of ex-convict actors first staged Miguel Pinero's drama Short Eyes (written out of Pinero's experiences inside a federal prison). Camillo described the need for creative discipline in the prison environment in these words:

> While Sing Sing was producing a corps of writers, the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility was giving birth to a troupe of actors. . . I discovered several things as I proceeded to work, and before long I realized that discipline and continuity were missing from the prisoner's lives and that these were the things that theatre could give to a group of men who, for the most part, had nothing to look forward to but a release date, forty dollars, and a suit.[2]

A broad range of communication avenues, particularly within the correctional environment, is crucial to inmates to prevent their withdrawal, hostility, and accumulation of negative feelings. Activities associated with interpretation of literature can facilitate self integration by providing a disciplined, and directed emotional outlet, and a socially acceptable manner of communicating responses to life experiences.

Review of Related Programs and Studies

The pioneer in the use of literature for rehabilitation is Jack Leedy, author of Poetry Therapy[3] and Poetry the Healer. As a psychiatrist with the Brooklyn-Cumberland Medical Center, and Director of the Poetry Therapy Center in New York, Leedy has explored the therapeutic values in poetry with neurotics, psychotics, and retardates in clinics, hospitals, and schools. He expresses the hope that poetry therapy will become an established part of the total treatment of the emotionally ill.

Leigh Steiner-Crane, the first person ever to be employed full time as an oral interpretation therapist in a therapeutic community, has written about her experiences in "Poetic Self-Actualization: Creative Stimulation for Rehabilitation and Reintegration."[5] In the article, and the thesis on which it is built, Steiner-Crane presents the theoretical principles behind her use of communication arts in a penal institution. WSIU-TV, of the University of Southern Illinois, produced a documentary of her work in the Menard Psychiatric Center correction facility.

David A. Williams, Department of Speech Communication at the University of Arizona, has worked extensively with oral interpretation techniques at the Arizona State Prison. He shared some of his findings, and the activities he used, in a convention program on poetry therapy (Speech Communication Association, December, 1974). In reporting on his work in the prison, Williams wrote:

> In the fall of 1973, I taught a course called Oral Interpretation of Poetry at the Arizona State Prison in Florence, Arizona. . . . I was not surprised with the impact of the course; we who teach interpretation know of its magic. . . The inmates took great pride in both their writing and their performance. Although asked to write only one poem, they deluged me weekly with their writing. They had found a forum for their emotions, and they loved the idea of poetry as "superior amusement" and "legitimized play."[6]

Janet Larson McHughes, Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, is currently working part time at correctional facilities using poetry, prose fiction, drama, music, slides, films, and other oral interpretation related activities with the capital offenders and other inmates designated as "sexually dangerous." In her work, she and her students made use of a huge plastic balloon as a theatrical and improvisational environment. Recently, she described the reactions of the inmates to her creative "bubble:"

> A few miles away, residents in the psychiatric center of a state penitentiary are escorted into a giant balloon that has been spectacularly decorated as a jungle. The real vines hanging from the inside ceiling, the accompanying music complete with background sounds of jungle animals, and the improvisation activities about to be shared will so transform the men out of their prison environment that they will never want to leave it.[7]

Other interpretation scholars whose work is meeting with success in the penal environment include Leland Roloff, Department of Interpretation, Northwestern University, who has been working for ten years with adolescent boys; Paul Brandes, Department of English, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who has a grant from HEW for his short course in communication in the prisons; and Janet G. Elsea, Department of Communication, Arizona State University, who has taken specially developed interpretation programs into both juvenile and criminally insane facilities in Phoenix.

Personnel

A communication arts program in a correctional facility should include both specialists in the communication arts and specialists in psychology or psychiatry. Communication arts personnel should always work directly with qualified psychiatric personnel to select literature for the inmates to interpret, to teach inmates to read aloud, to cultivate their abilities to listen and respond to literature, and to help them discuss the impact of the literature on their lives. By accepting all feelings and thoughts growing out of the communication arts experience, the personnel help inmates perceive themselves as more successful people because they cannot fail in the arts situation. This nonevaluative, nonjudgmental environment allows inmates to build their own self worth. Nevertheless, the personnel place responsibility for inmates' behaviors directly on the inmates themselves. Avenues of decision such

as how to portray a character, a speaker, or a scene, how to write a poem or a play, demand that inmates take responsibility for the outcome of their actions, thus assisting individuals in their search for greater self discipline through communicative expression.

Program Objectives

Working together, the communication arts personnel and the psychiatric personnel should design the program best suited to each individual's rehabilitative and reintegrative program. The curriculum for such a program should meet objectives such as these:

(1) increase awareness of verbal and nonverbal responses to communication situations through such activities as exercises in vocal flexibility, mime and dramatic improvisation;

(2) increase inmates' responses to changing patterns of behavior through individual interpretation of literature performances;

(3) emphasize implications for past, present, and future behavior by discussing ideas expressed in literary form as those ideas relate to the inmates;

(4) increase ego strength, and decrease anxieties and introversion through group interpretation activities such as interpreters theatre and choral reading;

(5) increase constructive feedback through video and audio taping of communication arts activities;

(6) increase ability to communicate through touring performance of individual and group readings;

(7) increase awareness of the impact of literature through motion pictures, video and audio tapes, filmstrips, television programming, slide shows, and other audio-visual techniques.

If the communication arts program includes appropriate pre and post tests administered to the inmate participants, it is possible to determine what changes may have taken place in their perception of themselves in relation to their rehabilitation treatment.

Expected Results

Because a character or speaker in literature acts both as a reflector of feelings and as a mask; and because the setting encourages imaginative relationships, a communication arts program in the prisons encourages free expression of normally concealed emotions, motives and desires. Ask an inmate what prison represents and the reply includes loneliness, depression, fear, hostility, but most of all utter boredom. Under such debilitating circumstances inmates often have a driving desire to talk about their responses to their environment. From our own experience, and

the experience of those quoted earlier, the communication arts offer a partial fulfillment of those desires, while, concurrently, they can meet the needs of a total rehabilitative program.

As an interpreter, actor, mime, or author, an inmate can choose how to portray a speaker in a poem, how to suggest a character, how to construct an imaginative scene, how to exercise control over voice and body, and how to involve listeners in the communicative act. Thus, through the vehicle of a communication arts program in the correctional institutions, selected inmates can realize personal growth and reintegration by learning (1) to be self examining, (2) to see various solutions to problems, and (3) to adjust to new situations with less fear--all essential abilities in the process of rehabilitation.

Footnotes

[1]Michael Hogan, "A Prison Workshop in Arizona," American Poetry Review 5 (January-February 1976), 12.

[2]Marvin Felix Camillo, "Introduction," Miguel Pinero, Short Eyes (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), p. viii.

[3]Jack Leedy, Poetry Therapy: The Use of Poetry In The Treatment of Emotional Disorders (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1969).

[4]_____, Poetry The Healer (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973).

[5]Leigh Steiner, "Poetic Self-Actualization: Creative Stimulation for Rehabilitation and Reintegration," Journal of the Illinois Speech and Theatre Association 28 (Fall 1974), 21-27.

[6]David A. Williams, "Interpretation in a Prison," I. D. Newsletter 14 (Speech Communication Association, Fall 1975), 5-8.

[7]Janet Larsen McHughes, "The Bubble as a Creative Environment for Drama," Communication Education 26 (September 1977), 214.

INTERPRETATION AS A METHOD FOR GROUP DISCUSSION OF FEMINIST LITERATURE

Robin Salem

Oral interpretation of literature has traditionally been an effective method of communication of ideas, emotions and aesthetics. Interpretation has also served as a catalyst for the development of self awareness and for the enlightenment of others in a performer/audience setting. In this study, the individuals involved served not only as performers, but also as the audience. In the casual atmosphere of the participants' homes, a group of women was introduced to the communicative and aesthetic aspects of oral interpretation, which served not only as an "art form of communication,"[1] but also as a method for facilitating discussion of issues pertinent to the group members.

The specific purpose of the study was to organize a small group of women who held the occupations of homemakers and mothers in order to study the possibility of attitude change among the members of the group through interaction by reading several pieces of feminist literature aloud and then discussing the implications of this literature.

The feminist movement was initially perceived by the group of women in this pilot study as denegrating the role of the homemaker in American society. Feminist literature was perceived by these homemakers as spending its energies on refining the image of the career woman. The person whose occupation is mainly concerned with managing a household and caring for children, whether that person is a man or a woman, appears to have been given less importance in the shuffle of an overdue and much needed social revolution. Are homemakers aware of the literature written about them? Do they sympathize with the feminist movement? Do they agree or disagree with the feminist point of view or are they simply apathetic about the women's movement? Do they think interpretation and subsequent discussion of literature is an effective means of communication? Would they feel better about themselves if they explored some feminist literature as a group and shared their ideas and emotions regarding the literature, themselves, and their roles in society? These specific questions served as guidelines for designing the present study.

Although some empirical methods were employed in this study, it was intended only as a pilot study to find out whether further study is warranted on the hypothesis that the interpretation of literature and discussion thereof can raise self esteem. In order to conduct a valid and reliable experiment of this kind, a larger sample of women than the sample used in the study would be necessary. Criteria for selecting the sample must be further defined. Also, the sample would have to be divided into an experimental group (women who experience interpretation and discussion of feminist literature) and a control group (women who do not share

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Robin Salem is a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Arizona State University.

this experience) in order to provide the experiment with some measurement of validity. Even more advantageous would be a study with three control groups: one in which the women participate by only reading feminist literature aloud, one in which the subjects discusses problems and issues pertinent to contemporary women; and one in which neither interaction is present during a meeting.

The sample for this study was a group of four women who reside in Paradise Valley, Arizona. Their ages range between thirty and forty-three. Each has at least one child whose ages range between six and twenty-three years of age. Each of the women has a different demographic background and each has held different occupations over the years. Each of the women is presently married and none is presently employed in a full-time capacity outside the home, although one of them works outside the home ten hours each week. None of the women had reading interests which encompassed the topic of feminist literature, yet each held egalitarian attitudes regarding the roles of men and women in American society before the start of the pilot study. Two of the women had been exposed to oral interpretation of literature as audience members and two of them had no exposure to interpretation prior to the initial meeting. The sample was obtained by the process of invitation. The author approached one woman who was interested in the idea of organizing a woman's interpretation and discussion group and she became responsible for organizing the group, its meeting place and the schedule for the meetings. For observation purposes, the size of the group was limited to five members. These five members include the author who served as a resource person for obtaining reading materials and as a facilitator during discussions, but, of course, did not serve as a subject for the study.

The meetings were held weekly, in the homes of various group members, and lasted approximately four hours. Each meeting was originally to have lasted only two and a half hours, but because of the high interest level of the group, this time was extended. Each week, a script was presented for the group to read aloud. A discussion period followed each reading guided by questions formulated or obtained by the author prior to each meeting. Two questionnaires were formulated by the author to extract from the subjects information regarding their demographic backgrounds, reading habits, previous exposure to oral interpretation and their attitudes toward oral interpretation of literature as a method of communication.[2] A third questionnaire, constructed by Dorothy Soricone,[3] was administered to measure attitudes toward the woman's role in American society. The Self Concept Semantic Differential developed by Pervin and Lilly[4] was employed to measure any change in the subjects' self concept which might occur as a result of participation in the group.

These questionnaires and measurements were administered as a pretest at the commencement of the initial meeting of the group. After six consecutive weekly meetings, the same measurements, with the exception of questions regarding demographics and reading habits, were again administered to the subjects as a posttest. The author also recorded observations of the group following each weekly meeting to trace the development of the group in regard to interest level, enthusiasm and development

of expression and articulation. Each reading and discussion session was recorded on audio tape. To give the reader a better idea of the initial climate and proceedings of the group, the following is a portion of the journal entry recorded after the first meeting of the group:

> Before the actual reading commenced on Tuesday morning, I asked the women to complete each of the four questionnaires. After this was completed, I introduced myself, my reasons for forming the group and I spoke for a short time about feminism. As soon as the word was mentioned, each woman displayed negative nonverbal reactions and gave negative verbal feedback. When these women were asked for an ideal definition of feminism, they all responded in a similar fashion, mentioning the words, "equality." "freedom," and "freedom from pressure of stereotypes." They all ascribed to Bird's definition of New Feminism before it was read to them aloud: "New Feminists think sex roles are obsolete at work and should not be revived. They see no use in ascribing special advantages or handicaps to women in men's jobs."[5] When given the following definition of feminism provided by Dr. Janet G. Elsea and revised by myself, all of the women voiced complete agreement: "Feminism is a state of mind reflecting the idea that all persons should be aware of their potential to function in any capacity they choose regardless of the physical fact of their sex."[6] They were surprised to learn that they and their husbands were feminists. We discussed feminism, sex roles, etc. for forty-five minutes before the trigger script was read.

The literature read and discussed during the group's meetings addressed several issues and problems peculiar to women through several different techniques and writing styles. During the initial meeting, the group read and discussed a script compiled by K. B. Valentine and Charlotte Waisman titled, "Who Wants to Live in a Shoe?"[7] Various aspects of women's roles in contemporary American society are presented in the format of a television talk show in this script.

Another readers theatre script compiled by Valentine and Waisman, "Red Rover, Red Rover, Let My Baby Come Over," dealt with children "affecting and effecting our lives."[8] This script was built around nursery rhymes and focused on the pressures from family and society on couples who decide against having children, on the unmarried mother, and on the joys, frustrations and heartaches involved with motherhood. The subjects did not always agree with the pervasive "feminist" attitudes apparent in the scripts. These scripts, however, seemed to instill in the women a committment to the importance of group discussion and give the women both a focus and a launching point for their discussions.

During one of our morning sessions, the women expressed a desire to read a piece of literature concerning women who return to work outside the home or return to higher education after several years of working as homemakers and as volunteers. The next week, therefore, Gay Neale's short story, "The Other Life of Alice Cornwell,"[9] was read and discussed. Neale focuses on some of the social pressures involved with the wealthy,

middle aged wife and mother who wishes to work in a "low status job" and also on some of the apprehensions and anxieties which may face a woman whose family opposes her desire to return to work. After this reading, the discussion became highly personal and the sense of involvement within the group had become more intense than it had been in the two previous discussions. The actual interpretation of the literature also became, by this third meeting, much improved and more expressive.

Erma Bombeck's book, I Lost Everything in the Post-Natal Depression, provided both a humorous and a serious approach to homemaking and motherhood. The group read the first chapter of the book, "Ironed Sheets are a Health Hazard" and the last chapter, "But Seriously Folks..."[10] The discussion of Bombeck's Ironed Sheets are a Health Hazard" was initially filled with laughter and the recollection of situations similar to those read aloud. Familial relationships were discussed at length both humorously and seriously. One group member asked whether Bombeck ever wrote in a serious tone, which induced the author to suggest reading aloud the last chapter of I Lost Everything in the Post-Natal Depression. Ater this reading, an emotional discussion evolved as the group members expressed their concern for the futures of their children and for the future of American society. The group reached its highest plateau of committment, cohesion and oppenness during this discussion. The group now had a highly positive outlook for the remainder of the meetings.

Even though all of the subjects are married, they expressed an interest in reading about and discussing the unmarried woman and her relationship to contemporary society. The group read the drama, Play with a Tiger,[11] written by Doris Lessing. Loneliness, isolation, old age, infidelity, and the role of the self-supporting woman as well as the problems that unmarried men often face were some additional topics for discussion after reading Play with a Tiger.

The sixth meeting of the interpretation and discussion group dealt with the historical implications of feminism. After reading "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman,"[12] written by Mary Wollstonecraft and first published in 1792, the group discussed the evolution of the women's movement and also discussed the works and ideas of Abigail Adams, George Sand, Virginia Woolf and Emily Dickinson. The group members also compared and contrasted the woman's movement in the eighteenth, nineteenth and the twentieth centuries.

Due both to the highly personal nature of the test measurement involved and to the very small sample involved in this study, the test results of specific subjects will not be exposed. No change occurred in the egalitarian attitudes of the group members toward the roles of women and men in contemporary American society. A slight rise in the group's scores on the Self Concept Semantic Differential was noted, however, when the posttest, administered six weeks after the pretest, was compared with the self-concept scores on the pretest.

One of the questions on the pretest asked the subjects why they

joined the group. There were three main responsen to this question: 1) because they were invited by a friend; 2) because a group of this nature sounded interesting; and 3) because they had a surplus of free time. When asked on the posttest, "If you were suggesting to someone to join this group, what reasons would you give them for joining, if any?" The responses showed a highly positive attitude toward the group and an increased interest level toward the group's activities.

> "I would tell anyone that I feel it has been a very enlightening experience. I feel I have learned many interesting things both about literature and about the people in the group. I would tell them to join and become stimulated by the interaction of the group and the literature - plus, it's fun."
>
> "I would tell them you feel better about yourself and your opinions by discussing them openly with other people."
>
> "There is a relaxed, compatible relationship between participants."
>
> "It gives people an opportunity to expand one's thinking patterns."

When asked on the posttest if participation in the group had changed the members in any way, comments were made such as:

> "I think it is a mind expanding experience and has made me more open-minded."
>
> "It has acquainted me with some interesting feminist literature and it has made me think more."
>
> "I believe it has helped me to express what I'm feeling and thinking much better now than I did before our group began."
>
> "It makes me feel as though I have something to contribute and that what I have to say is worthwhile and not ridiculous."

When asked on the pretest for attitudes regarding oral interpretation as a method of communication, two of the subjects expressed a positive attitude and two had no comment to make because they had never before considered oral interpretation as a method of communication. On the posttest, however, a similar question was posed. All of the answers were similar to the following comment:

> "I feel that the literature has stimulated thoughts and opinions that might not have occurred in ordinary discussion groups. I think it is a very effective tool for communication."

Although there is insufficient empirical evidence to conclude that the subjects in this study did increase their self esteem as a result of participation in the interpretation and discussion group, the hypothesis appears to bear substantial validity. With a more refined empirical measurement for attitude change and with a larger pool of

subjects, an experimental study of the effects of interpretation and discussion is warranted.

In a speech given at the 1977 Western Speech Communication Association luncheon, Wallace Bacon commented on the potential effectiveness of oral interpretation as a channel for communication. Interpretation, he said, can be equally as effective as a communication tool with an audience of one or an audience of thousands. Awareness of oneself and realization of the world around oneself can be brought about by the interpretation of literature, regardless of audience setting or size.[13] Through experimental learning, the group involved in this study agrees with Dr. Bacon's comment.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), p. 2.

[2]Copies of each of these questionnaires and measurements are available from the author, Arizona State University, Department of Communication and Theatre, upon request.

[3]Dorothy Soricone, "Aggressive Humor Preference as a Measure of Attitudes Toward Sex Role Behavior," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Arizona State University, June, 1978.

[4]Pervin and Lilly as quoted in John P. Robinson and Phillip R. Shaver, eds., Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Publications Division, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1969), pp. 83-84.

[5]Caroline Bird, Born Female, Rev. Ed. (New York: Pocket Books, 1969), p. 129.

[6]Interview with Janet G. Elsea, PhD. Associate Professor, Department of Communication and Theatre, Arizona State University, September 27, 1977.

[7]K. B. Valentine and Charlotte Waisman "Who Wants to Live in a Shoe?" Unpublished script, 1976.

[8]K. B. Valentine and Charlotte Waisman "Red Rover, Red Rover, Let My Baby Come Over," Unpublished script, 1976.

[9]Gay Neale, "The Other Life of Alice Cornwell," Yankee, (September, 1977), pp. 98-101.

[10]Erma Bombeck, I Lost Everything in the Post-Natal Depression Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1973), pp. 1-13 & 154-161.

[11]Victoria Sullivan and James Hatch, eds., Plays By and About Women New York: Vintage Books, 1974), pp. 201-274.

[12]Miriam Schneir, ed., Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings New York: Vintage Books, 1972), pp. 5-16.

[13]Wallace A. Bacon, Speech delivered at the Western Speech Communication Association convention luncheon, Tuesday, November 22, 1977.

Studying Small Group Communication and Interpreters Theatre: An Application of Crowell and Scheidel's "Categories For Analysis of Idea Development"

by

Susan Pearsall Hoffer

For eight years I have been involved in both conventional and interpreters theatre productions. In both instances, my most recent involvement has been in a directorial capacity. Yet at the same time, as a student in communication, I had an interest in small group communication. Out of this interest arose my concern about small group communication among cast members. When packing up pencils and prompt book after a particularly unproductive rehearsal session, I found myself wondering where the communication breakdown had occurred among the members of the group. When the rehearsal had been a productive one, on the other hand, I wished to know what behaviors worked to our benefit, so that I might reinforce them. Until recently, I did not have the means or opportunity to study this communicative phenomena.

For my study of what consistent behaviors manifest themselves in rehearsal situations, I have chosen to use Crowell and Scheidel's "idea development"[1] system. To facilitate further studies in the area of communication in rehearsal situations, I have attempted to find indications of the advisability of using this system for identifying and analyzing communicative behaviors in rehearsals. I researched and rejected several content analysis systems but decided to use Crowell and Scheidel's system because of its categories which are clearly defined and easily understandable.

In my research for this study, I found only one paper which dealt empirically with small group theory and interpreters (readers)[2] theatre.[3] The further need for empirical research in communicative phenomena and Interpretation and the need to study Interpretation and the rehearsal setting are two of the four warrants for this study. In the past few years, there have been numerous studies of group communication and conventional theatrical rehearsal situations. Robert Porter and George Gunkle are empiricists and artists whose names I have encountered frequently in my research.[4] Communication associations have devoted recent convention time to the presentation and discussion of papers dealing with group behaviors and cast-director relationships in rehearsals.[5] My research indicates that the area of group communication and interpreters theatre rehearsals however, is virtually untouched.

A third reason for pursuing research in this area is that through the analysis of readers theatre rehearsal interaction, we can learn more about how small groups operate. In their unpublished manuscript titled

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"Certain Effects Of Different Leadership Modes Upon Participants in Readers Theatre Production Groups," authors Lynda G. Cleveland and Charles N. Wise state that:

> Readers Theatre groups may be studied as groups in the same sense as sociologists, social psychologists, and speech communication students have studied small groups. Like other groups, Readers Theatre participants may be examined in terms of membership, group structure and leadership.[6]

Out of this study of group communication to which Cleveland and Wise refer we may learn more about how a group of interpreters form into a cast.

My final rationale for the importance of this study is that a new area, to which we can apply Crowell and Scheidel's system of content analysis, is to test the possibilities of its future use in analysis of rehearsal interactions. To observe, identify, and analyze the particular phenomenon of rehearsal interaction, a particular tool is needed. My study explores the possibilities of the ideational development system as a tool for analysis of rehearsal interaction in readers theatre.

For readers to be able to interpret my results, it is important for me to define interpreters (readers) theatre.

Like many of my colleagues around the country, I find it difficult to give a single source. With the changing and constantly expanding dimensions of interpreters theatre, it is best to draw from more than one existing definition. Two quotations come to the forefront when I am pressed for a definition of readers theatre. Don Geiger offers a definition of Interpretation which applies equally well to readers theatre: ". . .oral interpretation, then, is an unformulable amalgam of acting, public speaking, critical reaction, and sympathetic sharing....It presumes to be, like other kinds of literary interpretation, a critical illumination publicly offered in behalf of the literature."[7] Equally important, in my estimation, is Joanna Maclay's definition of readers theatre as a performance "featuring the text."[8] In different ways, and by different authorities of Interpretation, these two quotations appear to have a common denominator of many definitions of interpreters theatre. Maclay explains the term "featuring the text" in this way:

> By 'featuring the text,' I mean that the purpose of the production is to clarify, illuminate, extend, or provide insights into the particular literary text being presented.[9]

Using these two definitions as a basis, I judged the two productions I studied to be "interpreters theatre."

Four features of my study limited its scope. The first limitation

was the number of groups I studied. While the observation of only two groups may open new areas in communication research, or point to a particular finding, two is not a large enough number from which to generalize.

The second factor which proved to be a limitation was that I had access only to collegiate interpreters theatre rehearsals. Although there are many groups in the immediate area which perform using interpreters theatre techniques, they were not readily accessible for this study.

The fact that I was unable to attend or record all of the rehearsal periods in which the productions rehearsed, created my third limitation. Because of scheduling conflicts, attending all the rehearsals was impossible. The data bank I have to draw from is, therefore, not as complete as I would have wished it to be.

The fourth, and final limitation was time. I had only one month in which to collect, code, and review my data. This time span prevented studying any production rehearsing beyond that time limit.

For these four reasons, I view my study as a pilot one. At a later date, I hope that a communication scholar will be able to expand upon the foundations of this study.

Since the foundation of my study is dependent upon the use of the Crowell and Scheidel ideational development categories, it is essential to examine them closely.

In their article titled, "Categories for the Analysis of Idea Development in Discussion Groups," the creators of the system, Laura Crowell and Thomas Scheidel list and discuss the components of their system quite thoroughly.[10] The examples and applications of the system as explicated in the article, are helpful. The ideational system is an empirical approach to the analysis of the process of group reasoning.[11] Crowell and Scheidel explain the use of the system in this way:

> The successive contributions of the participants are divided into thought-units, that is, into units of the smallest ideational contributions. In some cases the unit may be a phrase; in others, a sentence; in some, a paragraph. Essentially, it is the smallest unit which can, in itself, be categorized according to our system.[12]

There are five dimensions of categories which are used to code the recorded data. These dimensions are:

I.	A	Assertion
	Q	Question
	AQ	Assertion-Question
II.	O	Information
	E	Inference
III.	S	Substantive

	P	Procedural
IV	V	Volunteered
	R	Requested
V	1	Initiation
	2	Restatement
	3	Clarification
	4	Substantiation
	5	Extension
	6	Simple response to request
	7p	Positive Modification
	7c	Negative Modification
	8a	Stated Acceptance-approval
	8r	Stated Rejection-disapproval
	9	Synthesis
	10	Summary[13]

Using the Crowell and Scheidel ideational system, the methodology of this study was as follows: I sat in on two interpreters theatre groups which were rehearsing for performances scheduled one week to three weeks in the future. The group which rehearsed for one week was a student directed production, rehearsing for an on campus production. I will call this group, Group A. The second group, which will be known as Group B, was directed by a faculty member of the university. This group was in production for approximately three weeks.

As explained previously in this paper, I attended as many rehearsals as possible of both productions. Even when I was not in attendance personally, someone recorded the rehearsal for me. In this way, I was able to code the data by hand at a later date. This proved to be the best possible alternative for this study for the rehearsals, even though the Crowell and Scheidel method is usually executed with a machine which had a moving piece of paper so that a rater must keep working at a consistent speed to record the data.

Using the categories from Crowell and Scheidel, I then coded the data onto paper and from the collected information, I looked for consistent indications of specific behaviors.

As I stated earlier, I can draw no specific conclusions or indeed, attempt to generalize to all situations about a specific behavior. I can only point out tendencies which I found in analyzing these two groups.

From the data I gathered from my recordings, I noted similarities between the group communication in each of the productions. A tendency for the director to control initial rehearsals is evident in my findings. This phenomenon also appears to be part of a pattern which manifested itself in both productions. The phenomenon is generally an initial rhearsal domination by director/submission by cast followed by, at the mid-point of rehearsals, more active participation in the direction of the group by the cast members and more submission by the director; and near the end of the rehearsal schedule, the director again appearing to take a firmer control of the rehearsal periods.

In terms of director control, slightly more authoritarian behaviors was exhibited by the production with the faculty member as director. Group A, with the student director, who was some what less authoritarian than the director of Group B, as a whole, ventured more opinions and had more input to the total production throughout the entire rehearsal period.

Another interesting note about Group B is that there was an assistant director who was accorded full power to conduct and direct rehearsals in the absence of the faculty member. Various members of the cast reacted differently to this delegation of authority by outward displays of refusal to work as hard and rejection of the assistant's suggestions.

As limited as this study is, it would appear that the Crowell and Scheidel system is probably not a particularly useful tool for studying rehearsal interaction. If I had been studying only the flow and concentration of communication in a small group, it would have been more useful. To take a general look at what kind of interaction behaviors were occurring, a more interactive system would have been more useful. Crowell and Scheidel allowed me to see the progressive modification of the ideas in the rehearsal situations, but it does not look at interactive behaviors except in terms of how specific comments effect or facilitate the modification of ideas.

A new system for the analysis of communicative behaviors in rehearsal situations is needed. To study these interactive rehearsal behaviors further, a combination of two systems needs to be established, with the new system helping observers analyze both content and process behaviors for a more complete look at the overall patterns of communicative behaviors in rehearsal situations of interpreters theatre. Such a system does not, at present, appear to exist. The author welcomes any correspondence with regard to the construction of such a content analysis system.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Laura Crowell and Thomas M. Scheidel, "Categories For Analysis of Idea Development In Discussion Groups," Journal of Social Psychology, 54 (1961), 155.

[2]Within the body of my paper I use the terms "readers theatre" and interpreters theatre" interchangeably. This is derived from my collegiate experiences in the midwest and west where both terms are used all-inclusively, rather than to specify one particular production style.

[3]Lynda Cleveland and Charles N. Wise, "Certain Effects Of Different Leadership Modes Upon Participants In Readers Theatre Production Groups," unpublished paper delivered at the Western Speech Communication Association Convention, Portland, Oregon, 1975.

[4]Both Porter and Gunkle have given numerous papers at conventions. I was unable to receive them in time for this study, however.

[5]The Western Speech Communication Association presented half a module of convention time to the Theatre Division for presentation of studies involving research and empirical study. (Phoenix, Arizona, 1977).

[6]Cleveland and Wise, pp. 1-2.

[7]Don Geiger, as quoted by Leslie Irene Coger and Melvin R. White in Readers Theatre Handbook: A Dramatic Approach to Literature (Glenview, Il.: Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1967), p. 5.

[8]Joanna Hawkins Maclay, Readers Theatre: Toward a Grammar of Practice (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 3.

[9]Maclay, p. 3.

[10]Crowell and Scheidel, pp. 157-65.

[11]Laura Crowell and Thomas M. Scheidel,"Idea Development In Small Discussion Groups," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 50 (April, 1964), p. 140.

[12]Crowell and Scheidel, 141.

[13]Crowell and Scheidel, 141-42.

Holistic Interpretation in Worship and Liturgy

By

Jacqulyn E. Walker

Holistic interpretation is that fine essence, admittedly oblique and undeniably intangible, which is produced when a message has been communicated in as much entirety as humans are capable of emitting or comprehending. Holistic interpretation explores as many aesthetic ways as possible to enhance and experience literature. It seeks not only to vocalize but ultimately to embody and physicalize an idea, emotion, theory, etc., by passing it through the kinesthesia of the body. When this occurs the final result is an aesthetic whole which must be responded to as more than the sum of its parts. In the following pages I will explore the historical framework of communication arts in worship and liturgy; a framework from which holistic interpretation can be viewed.

Walter Sorell in his book, The Dance Through The Ages, makes a real contribution to a rationale for a holistic view of interpretation. In positing his thought of aesthetic unity, he reminds us that "before our tongue and lips can form the word, our arms, hands and face—obeying the commands of our thought-feelings--point them through the involuntary expression of movement. And every gesture, the symbolic language, reaches our fellow men more quickly than words, the factual language." Sorell is insistent, even as others have been, that although "the exalted and ecstatic voice may awake our spirit, . . . it is movement that carries us away, that makes us ready to follow the voice.[1]

J. Marks not only concurs with Sorell but contributes to a rationale for the framework in which we are seeking to view holistic interpretation--namely, the history of worship and liturgy. He draws on the primal nature of humankind when he writes:

> Whatever the meaning of ritual dances and acts for our distant ancestry, it remains that there is no more specific and direct enunciation of man's state of being than found in movement. Before speech, even before vocal utterance, comes voluntary and involuntary motion and gesture. It is apparent that the first manifestations of ideas or feelings in man were found in his bodily actions. . . . Rhythm becomes a means of understanding where explanation is impossible.[2]

Friedrich Schiller, seeing our beginnings as a virtual state of slavery, argues that "man, as an animal, is bound by the shackles of

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physical necessity but seeks to become free of this slavery by attaining to a spiritual state." The question he asks is: how is man "to accomplish this desired end, when he must satisfy the demands of both needs unless somehow he is able to bring them into harmony with one another?" This, according to Schiller, "may be achieved only by advancing from the merely physical to the aesthetic condition which unites matter and form, sensuality and reason, and through its agency, reach the rational or moral condition."[3]

The basis of this paper is that holistic interpretation is an aesthetic form which may act as a freeing agent both for the holistic interpreter and for his/her audience. The function of holistic interpretation is to place the watcher/listener inside the totality to which the interpreter has responded. Within the framework of worship and liturgy, a primary goal traditionally has been the communication of liberation and freedom. This goal can be accomplished through holistic interpretation: it evokes a response wherein audience and interpreter alike are placed inside the totality. The watching body tends to imitate (kinesthetically) the moving body it is observing: flowing or praying, worshipping or exulting imitatively through its empathic, small muscle responses. It is a primary (primal) means toward holistic worship—a means of inviting the totality of the humans present to enter into worship. Martin Foss has appropriately stated: "just because religion is always in danger of limiting itself to an accidental and expedient system of ritual by which world is turned into mere environmental organization, it finds its true life again in the poetic expression of metaphorical transcendence. . . ." He concludes by saying, "poetry, art, etc., act as counterbalances to the church's tendency to fixation and sterility."[4]

Having offered a brief rationale both for the definition and for its setting in worship and liturgy, I ask: what, briefly, is the historical framework for this setting in worship and liturgy? Starting with primitive men, whether they be primitive men of four thousand years ago or primitive men found anywhere in the world today, Susanne K. Langer, in Problems of Art, writes:

> Primitive men live in a world of demonic Powers. Sub-human or superhuman, gods or spooks or impersonal magic forces, good or bad luck that dwells in things like an electric charge, are the most impressive realities of the savage's world. The drive to artistic creation, which seems to be deeply primitive in all human beings, first begets its forms in the image of these all-surrounding Powers. The magic circle around the altar or the totem pole, the holy space inside the kiwa or the temple, is the natural dance floor.[5]

Probably the most complete wedding of mimeses, music, interpretation

and dance occurred among the Greeks. According to Lilly Grove, "to the Greeks belongs the triumphant demonstration that poetry, music, and dancing can form one art."[6] For example, Grove wrote that, "while all Greek dancing was founded upon a religious idea, that of the Delian feast was especially sacred."[7] This dance was introduced at the festival of Apollo by young Athenians and Delians. It was a festival which took place every five years to honor both ancient gods, Artemis and Apollo. During this Spring celebration, Delian maidens crowned with flowers and dressed in festive attire would dance to joyful choruses around the altars of the two deities and tell, by performing sacred ballets, the story of the birth of Apollo and Artemis. Choruses and hymns followed, regulating the dancers, who held garlands to hang before the statue of Aphrodite, the mother of the two deities. Those who offered the sacrifices to the national gods were noble Athenians and had been conducted from Athens to Delos in special vessels. After the sacrifices, another dance followed in which the women imitated the movement of the island when it was still supposed to be tossed by the sea.[8]

Sorell says that dance was very much a part of the life of Biblical man as well as the early Greeks. "The revelation of Biblical prophets were, to a great extent, based on their gift of ecstacy," Sorell writes, and furthermore, "the Dance, movement and gesture, also play a part in prophecy which must not be underestimated."[9] An example of later Hebrew practices is that of the Jewish festival at which, according to Grove, "the great Hallelujah was sung by a chorus moving in rhythm." She said that two choruses were formed, one composed of men and one of women, who sang hymns of praise and accompanied them with dance movements. She also says that, "the Rabbinic books refer several times to the Creator dancing as a token of joy after He had made man."[10]

One final example which also appears to evidence this paper's definition of holistic interpretation is found in the history of the early Christian Church. In the context of this paper this illustration seems important enough to justify a fairly lengthy quotation. Sorell notes that "the very idea of dancing had a sacred meaning to the early Christians," and goes on to offer the following observation:

> We possess the priceless Gnostic 'Hymn of Jesus' from the second-century Acts of John. This wonderful hymn is the earliest Christian ritual of which we know. We can see in it a sacred dance wherein the newborn disciple is united with the Master, the purified human nature with the Divine Presence. No matter what interpretation we give it, it clearly describes the Last Supper, at which Christ takes leave of his disciples. It is the source of the Catholic Mass, which originally was a dance, a divine pantomime. Jesus gathered his disciples, as John tells us, and, before going out to fulfill His destination, commands them to dance around Him in a circle. In this sacred union he speaks the words: 'Whoso danceth not, knoweth not the way of life.

Now answer thou to my dancing. Behold thyself in me who speak, and seeing what I do, keep silence about my mysteries.'

To some of us it may be bewildering to think of the early Christians dancing, let alone to imagine Jesus leading a dance. But we must then blame our misconception of the role dancing played as ritual when man tried to come closer to the mystery of the great unknown. Then we find his deities dancing. In Egypt it was Osiris, in Greece Dionysus who, in his more spirited and more wanton way, typified the rejoicing that is dance. And the most perfect type of a dancing god is India's Shiva who danced the world into being and whose dance keeps it in sacred order.[11]

Dances in the Christian Church degenerated to extravaganzas "mixed with touches of barbarism and paganism."[12] For this reason the early Church Fathers spoke out heatedly against the use of dance in any form.[13] "The Council of 692 expressly forbade dancing in churches and graveyards."[14] In spite of these early prohibitions, however, people continued to dance and threat of punishment could not stop them, "nor could the threat of punishment stifle their impulse to seek freedom from that bodily heaviness which is indicative of wordly attachment."[15]

According to Sorell there are many theories as to why the Church turned against dancing. The primary one was probably that the Church "saw human goodness only in the soul and all evil in the body" which conformed to "St. Paul's conception of the spirit as opposed to the senses and his contempt for the body and its functions." Later, Sorell observes that although this separation of drama and dance occurred in the West, "dance in the East never severed its ties with the religious rites and it never gave up being an essential part of all theatrical performances."[16] It is also important to add that by the thirteenth century the West was again permitted music, dancing and poetry "in the very sanctuary by the introduction of the mystery plays."[17]

That permission has grown to a demand in the twentieth century. Seminaries are offering degree programs in "Religion and the Arts" and in "Worship and Dance."[18] Churches are seeking trained persons who can provide holistic interpretation (including poetry, oral interpretation, dance and music) in the sanctuary as a part of the total liturgical celebration.[19] These are but brief examples of something that is approaching movement proportions. David A. Kister, writing in the December, 1971, issue of Worship, says:

Theatrical means can vivify today, as they did in the Middle Ages, the presentation of central mysteries of salvation. They can also reinforce the presentation of other events of scripture, parables, moments in the history of God's people, and contemporary events viewed through the eyes of faith.[20]

The reader may have noted the emphasis on dance in the preceding pages. Not that dance is the most important component in holistic interpretation but dance is often discounted in the holistic approach because of the argument that added elements of music and dance distract the audience from the message of the oral interpretation performance. In some cases, this is a valid argument especially when the performer becomes the tour de force and the literature is lost or the text is not featured.[21] However, to use that argument to prevent any interrelating of the arts is just as harmful because we are not then exploring every nuance of the message being communicated and allowing ourselves to be free to experience the message in a totality.

What, then, are the conclusions which may be drawn from this brief survey? First, the definition which was posited finds justification in the writings of a number of scholars. Second, historical praxis demonstrates and justifies the validity of the framework in which the definition is cast. The third conclusion presupposes the recommendation that further investigation of contemporary approaches to liturgy and worship should be done and that such investigations seem certain to discover even more instances in which holistic interpretation is already a viable aesthetic form.

Footnotes

[1]Walter Sorell, The Dance Through the Ages (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1967), p. 19.

[2]J. Marks, A Pictorial History of the Dance (San Francisco: Contemporary Dancers Foundation, 1962), p. 12.

[3]Friedrich Schiller, Briefe uber die asthetische Erziehung des Menschen as quoted in Dance History Research: Perspectives From Related Arts and Disciplines edited by Joann W. Kealiinokamoku, (Warrenton, Va.: CORD Second Conf. on Research in Dance, 1970), pp. 7-8.

[4]Martin Foss, Symbol and Metaphor in Human Experience (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), p. 118.

[5]Susanne Langer, Problems of Art (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 12.

[6]Lilly Grove, Dancing: A Handbook of the Terpsichorean Arts in Diverse Places and Times, Savage and Civilized (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1895), p. 34.

[7]Grove, pp. 45-46.

[8]Grove, p. 46.

[9]Sorell, p. 19.

[10]Grove, p. 94.

[11]Sorell, pp. 20-21.

[12]Grove, p. 96.

[13]Sorell, p. 19.

[14]Grove, p. 96.

[15]Sorell, p. 19.

[16]Sorell, p. 39.

[17]Grove, p. 50.

[18]Graduate Theological Union and Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California.

[19]St. John's Presbyterian Church, Berkeley, California and Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland, California.

[20]David A. Kister, "Dance and Theatre in Christian Worship," Worship, 45 (December, 1971), p. 598.

[21]Wallace Bacon, The Art of Interpretation (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972), p. 311.

CONVERSATION WITH JANET ELSEA

"Interpretation & Society"

Q: What is the background for your expertise in interpretation since your graduate emphasis was rhetorical theory and public address?

A: I majored in Speech and Theatre at the University of California, Davis, and took its lone course in interpretation, taught by a Northwestern graduate. I remember liking the oral qualities of literature and of reading aloud. My masters at UCD was in theatre history with an interest in directing. After a year of study at the University of Oregon, I joined the faculty at the University of Massachusetts, where I taught public speaking and a course in oral interpretation. There, in 1967, I saw my first readers theatre production: Coger and White's adaptation of Dandelion Wine. When I saw the music stands and black stools, I nearly walked out. Then in came people in black suits and black gowns and proceeded to read; I was intrigued by the sounds of their voices and I loved the vocal effects. While I was doing my PhD at the University of Iowa and teaching speaking, writing, and reading in its rhetoric program, I began trying some oral interpretation techniques because it seemed a natural way of enhancing these skills. I even taught an interp class, probably the only time Iowa offered it. In 1970, I accepted an offer to teach oral interpretation and direct the readers theatre program at Arizona State University. My first semester I was assigned a public speaking course, a senior level prose course and the beginning interp course; even my shows had been picked--two readers theatre chestnuts: The World of Carl Sandburg and Spoon River Anthology. I said to myself, "I don't know much about readers theatre, but now that I'm directing it, it ought to be a lot of fun." I read everything I could and was impressed with Coger's description of readers theatre as "theatre of the mind." The notion of off-stage focus to help the audience create mental images of the text intrigued me. My costumer, who loved readers theatre, helped me break out of black clothes for performers; a student designed a set of ramps and levels; and the cast picked its own props. I re-edited the Corwin script, introducing Sandburg and a reporter as characters, and one of my students wrote some original music. We opened to rave reviews, and the darn thing was a hit.

Q: Most schools have the basic interpretation course followed by genre courses in the interpretation of prose, poetry, and drama with graduate courses in selected writers. How did you come to develop your courses in "interpretation in social contexts" and "interpretation and the mass media?"

A: A number of factors brought about the change from the traditional

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genre approach. For some years our department at ASU was in the same building as the English department; many English teachers had theatre background, loved our productions, and sent students to us for the oral study of literature. Their courses in poetry, prose and dramatic literature are excellent, so I thought, "How can we possibly replicate their offerings in interpretation?" Secondly, I realized that our antiquated theatre here was neither going to present the best challenge to me as a director, nor to the students, so I began to stage productions in unusual places in and around campus. Third, by 1974,a whole "generation" of my students were in the real world and were reporting back that they wished we had offered them a more practical orientation so they could make more use of their interpretation skills and knowledge. Another factor was my position as a feminist and my interest in the unique problems of women; then, too, the Viet Nam war was winding down, and our social consciences were still keen enough that we wanted our literature to address these concerns. A final factor was the interest a former colleague, Rose Marie Smith, had in oral traditions, especially Southwestern literature of native Americans; we realized this was another area neglected in traditional interpretation curricula.

These factors led to our redesigning the offerings in interpretation. Fortunately, the College of Fine Arts and our department, have always been liberal in allowing new courses so we made some major changes in the mid-1970's with the notion of interpretation in a contemporary society as the catalyst.

Q: So, it was a matter of you and your students each reflecting the other's needs?

Largely. For example, many veterans wanted to study anti-war-poetry; feminists wanted to study literature from the women's movement; and some students wanted to read literature related to such problems as alcoholism and juvenile delinquency--a course which allowed them to do so was a natural evolution, as was the decision to take students performers and their literature out into the community.

Q: What is the relationship between communication and interpretation as you see it?

Literature is at the center of our communication process in interpretation, but, like any good communicator, the interpreter must analyze the audience carefully and select a "message" that will be best understood and appreciated by an audience. The fields of interest of the two must overlay if fusion is to occur. One must understand what the voice and body are conveying and what may "interfer" with the reception of the meaning, just as one must analyze the literature carefully and understand not only its levels of meaning but how best to convey them orally.

Q: You have an interest in expanding the boundaries of what has tradi-

tionally defined the categories of interpreter-audience-literature, don't you?

A: I think it's safe to say that I am beyond the traditional assumption that an audience for interpretation events is well-educated people sitting in a theatre or classroom. I think of audiences as my Methodist sister does--"where two or more are gathered together. . . ." Audiences can be created by virtue of situation or by virtue of an act. Likewise, an interpreter need not be a trained individual, a performer who meets certain standards. An interpreter can be a prisoner, a mentally-retarded child, a worshipper. So, too, must the concept of what constitutes literature be broadened. Lily Tomlin's comedy sketches are literature; Erma Bombeck has been a marvelous resource; the cartoon is also literature--Doonesbury, for example, is a relevant, rhetorical resource, for the cartoonist doesn't worry about time lags and has the advantage of both visual and word images to convey his/her ideas. Paul Campbell's definition of literature is one which makes possible such a limitless variety of material: "literature is language notable for the expressiveness and imaginativeness of its content and/or form."

Q: After having taught your courses in "Interpretation in Social Contexts" what have you learned?

A: When one leaves the academic world of interpretation for other contexts unique considerations arise: learning about societal problems, be they alcoholism or delinquency, in enough depth to find and adapt literature that is appropriate; being familiar with institutions and their staffs, programs, and regulations; learning how to cut through red tape in order to present the kind of programs best suited to each situation and audience. Most important is learning how much good we can do with virtually no financial resources and how valuable such experiences can be for students.

Q: You are currently teaching a course called "Interpretation and the Mass Media." Would you describe it?

A: That class, too, stemmed from the eclectic views of our department and our move from the English building to one shared with the Department of Mass Communications. Affected as we Americans are by film, television, radio and cartoons, we rarely look in a formal way at its impact upon us and upon our literature, and vice-versa. In this course, therefore, we look at what happens to a novel, like Roots, when it becomes a film, a television program, or a radio drama. People such as Vonnegut, Didion, and Brautigan are contemporary writers whose styles have been affected by electronic media. We talk about point of view and how the camera can take a first person or omniscient perspective. We discuss imagery from the literary side and then see what happens to images when transmitted by means other than words. I find mass communication students getting turned on by literature and interpretation students appreciating media in deeper ways.

Q: Do you see ways in which elementary and high school teachers can use your approach to interpretation in the schools?

A: As we say with interpreters theatre, "Yes, because the only real boundary is a limited imagination." Today's youngsters have been raised with the electronic babysitter, rather than with books. What better way to turn them on to literature than by making use of media? Let them video tape their efforts, or use inexpensive movie cameras, or even make film strips. Slide shows are relatively inexpensive to put together. How about letting students create a radio drama by using tape recorders and letting them create the sound effects? Many of today's teenagers have a high social conscience and might be challenged by the preparation of interpreters theatre programs for the elderly, or for handicapped or retarded children. I realize transportation might be a problem, but if school boards could see the benefits to the community of such programs, perhaps funds might be made available. At any rate, teacher-friends of mine get quite excited about some of the new ways they might approach literature in the classroom; they, in turn, are preparing very special students for us to work with at the college level.

Q: With this new direction in interpretation at Arizona State, what is happening to your enrollment in interpretation courses?

We can't begin to service the demand. Fortunately, in this age of credit hour generation, we have a chair who supports our desire to limit enrollment in beginning courses, so we can provide the personal attention we think imperative for students new to interpretation; he also encourages us to undertake the challenges of our large enrollments in other interpretation courses. We have a lively group called "The I.T. Troupe" that performs interpreters theatre productions both on campus and in the community. And we have a growing number of graduate students doing exciting research--witness their papers in this issue--and working out creative projects.

Q. One last question--what do you see in the future for interpretation studies:

A. Except for higher education, interpretation looks healthy. We are seeing prisons, mental hospitals, recreation programs, and churches for example, making greater use of oral interpretation and interpreters theatre techniques. Professional feminist readers theatre groups are now touring the country. Interpreters theatre is often used in small groups such as consciousness raising groups and assertive training sessions. I've seen Broadway shows that use the sort of literature and performance approaches that we teach, from The Belle of Amhearst to For Colored Girls Who Consider Suicide. . . .

In higher education, however, we seem reluctant to undertake the sort of realistic assessment we must make if we are to incorporate twenty-first century demands into our curriculum, and indeed, if we are to understand the impact of the twentieth century upon students

and literature. I believe that until we realize that this art form of ours is also a powerful communication tool, and until we take it out of the womb of academia and give it birth in the "real world," interpretation programs will continue to wither away.

We need leadership which will force us to assess what is really happening to our students after they graduate and what we can do to help them use what we have so carefully taught them. No longer can that leadership come from a select few in a small geographical part of the country; we must assume the burden ourselves, as we are doing in the West, and begin to incorporate changes that will allow us to bring to more of society the values, the impact, of literature upon lives. I feel privileged that Arizona State University provides one such model for our profession.